

Application No. 10/024,269
Preliminary Amendment dated January 22, 2004

Listing of Claims

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45. (new) A slide case for holding and transporting at least one slide, the slide case comprising:

 a base comprising four walls connected to a bottom;
 a rack removably positionable within the base and comprising
 a frame comprising
 a first and second sides, and
 opposed ends connected to the first and second sides,
 a first support bar comprising
 a first edge connected to an inner surface of the first side to
 cantilever the first support bar from the first side, the first support
 bar being deflectable with respect to the first side, and
 a first opening for supporting one end of a slide, and
 a second support bar comprising
 a first edge connected to an inner surface of the second
 side to cantilever the second support bar from the second side, the
 second support bar being deflectable with respect to the second
 side, and
 a second opening disposed opposite the first opening for
 supporting an opposite end of the slide; and
 a cover having a projection on an inner surface and being positionable on
 the base to cause the projection on the cover to press against the slide and
 deflect the support bars, thereby securing the slide between the rack and the
 cover.

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46. (new) The slide case in accordance with claim 45 wherein each of the first and second support bars angles downward from a respective inner surface toward lower edges of the opposed ends of the frame, each of the first and second support bars forming an included acute angle with the respective inner surface and comprising respective ends that are spaced away from the opposed ends of the frame.
47. (new) The slide case in accordance with claim 45 further comprising pairs of opposed openings in the first and second support bars for holding and transporting a plurality of slides, each of the openings being substantially diamond shaped with two opposed corners of the diamond shape defining a line substantially perpendicular to a first edge of a respective one of the first and second support bars.
48. (new) The slide case in accordance with claim 45 wherein the lower edges of the opposed ends of the frame define a lowermost boundary of the frame, and the sides of the frame have respective lower edges above the lowermost boundary of the frame.
49. (new) The slide case in accordance with claim 45 further comprising:
 - a first latch portion disposed on the base; and
 - a second latch portion disposed on the frame such that upon positioning the rack within the base, the first and second latch portions are placed in juxtaposition to releasably secure the rack in the base.
50. (new) The slide case in accordance with claim 49 wherein the first latch portion comprises a detent disposed on a wall of the base, the second latch portion comprises a recess disposed in an end of the frame, and the end of the frame is deflectable to permit the detent to be moved with respect to the recess between latched and unlatched positions.

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51. (new) The slide case in accordance with claim 45 wherein the projection comprises at least one rib extending substantially perpendicular to a plane of the slide.

52. (new) The slide case in accordance with claim 45 wherein the frame further comprises first and second holes, each hole extending through a different one of the ends of the frame to facilitate picking up and carrying the rack.

53. (new) A method of holding and processing slides comprising:

inserting the slides into opposed pairs of openings disposed in opposed first and second supports within a rack, the rack comprising

a frame formed by first and second sides connected to respective first and second supports and opposed ends,

the first support comprising a first edge connected to an inner surface of the first side to cantilever the first support from the first side, the first support being deflectable with respect to the first side, and

the second support comprising a first edge connected to an inner surface of the second side to cantilever the second support from the second side, the second support being deflectable with respect to the second side;

inserting the rack with the slides into a processing device;

operating the processing device; and

removing the rack with the slides from the processing device.

54. (new) The method in accordance with claim 53 further comprising:

inserting the rack with the slides into a centrifuge; and

operating the centrifuge to cause fluid on the slides to flow off of the slides and along a flow path beneath the frame.

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55. (new) The method in accordance with claim 53 wherein each of the first and second supports angles downward from a respective inner surface toward lower edges of ends of the frame, each of the first and second supports forming an included acute angle with the respective inner surface and having respective ends that are spaced away from the ends of the frame and each opening of the opposed pairs of openings being substantially diamond shaped with two opposed corners of the diamond shape defining a line substantially perpendicular to a first edge of a respective one of the first and second supports.

56. (new) The method in accordance with claim 53 wherein prior to the step of inserting the rack with the slides into a processing device, the method further comprises:

inserting and securing the rack with the slides into a base; and
placing over the base, a cover having a projection extending from an internal surface and pressing against the slides to deflect the first and second supports, thereby securing the slides between the rack and the cover and allowing transportation of the slides in the rack within the base and cover.

57. (new) The method in accordance with claim 56 further comprising:

removing the cover from the base; and
removing the rack with the slides from the base.